

MINUTES

**McDowell Sonoran Preserve Commission
1st Fl. Community Development Conference Room
March 7, 2002
5:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Present: Art DeCabooter
Don Ruff
Darren Smith
Carla
Jane Rau
Bill Berkley
Laura Fisher
Dennis Carr
Howard Myers

Absent: Darcy Thomas
Les Conklin

Staff: Bob Cafarella
Claire Miller
Don Meserve
Cathy Eley

Visitors: Virginia Korte, John Nichols, Chet Andrews, Christine Kovach, Don Williams, Jim Ford
(Rural Metro Fire Department), David Bunce (SRP-MIC Fire Department)

MINUTES

Commissioner Carla suggested the following change:

Page 3, paragraph 7: "Commissioner ~~Carr~~ Carla requested that the Commission..."

MOTION WAS MADE by Commissioner Ruff to APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE February 14, 2002 MEETING AS AMENDED. MOTION WAS SECONDED by Commissioner Rau, which carried unanimously, 9-0.

FIRE PREVENTION/SUPPRESSION IN THE PRESERVE

Chief Bunce commented that the Fire Plan for the Preserve was done in 1999 and that it was a working document. Chief Bunce commented that this year there has been very little rain with above normal temperatures and that the prediction is that the fire season will be dry with above normal temperatures, which is considered "drought", noting that chaparral country is under a fire danger and that they are planning for the desert to be under a fire danger also.

Chief Bunce stated that the stewards would provide help in spotting fires and evacuation of the Preserve and that they would also be enforcing the no-smoking rule in the Preserve. Chief Bunce noted that the City Council has the authority to close down the Preserve if necessary. Chief Bunce commented that they need to address removal of fuel in the Preserve without disturbing the ecosystem. Chief Bunce stated that they would like to have the trails planned and designed to be used as fire breaks.

Commissioner Fisher asked how much lead time would the City Council need to close the Preserve and what is the criteria for closing the Preserve.

Chief Bunce suggested following the lead of the federal agencies around the State if they began closing down areas.

Commissioner Ruff commented that the utility companies who trim under the power line corridor in the Preserve leave the trimmings on the ground and asked if they should be removed.

Chief Bunce commented that the trimmings should be removed.

Chief Ford suggested that the Commission send a letter asking them to remove their trimmings.

Chairman DeCabooter asked that it be a future agenda item.

Chief Ford stated that the Airport Fire Station was an approved bond issue project and that it is being designed to accommodate airplanes. Chief Ford stated that the new station on Alma School, South of Dynamite is in the design process and that it would house the wildland fire crew and that the Thompson Peak Parkway/Pima Road station had opened recently.

Chief Ford stated that they were pre-planning for the summer and that they need to update the access areas maps and they need to note houses and access areas around the Preserve. Chief Ford commented that the new ESLO ordinance puts more defensible space between houses and the Preserve.

Chief Ford commented that they were working on air tanker support and that they would need funding sources, noting that they would again be asking the developers for that. Chief Ford commented that they would like to use the GPS system for the trails and access areas.

Chief Ford noted that Mr. Jekel was working on a smaller single engine plane being located at the airport.

Commissioner Carla asked where the funding would come from and if funding from the developers was sufficient.

Chief Ford stated that in the past the developers have funded the air tankers and that typically there has been no associated costs for the single engine plane to be located at Scottsdale Airport, as the tie-down, electricity, etc. have been provided at no cost. Chief Ford noted that this plane would not be dedicated to Scottsdale.

Commissioner Carla commented that the stewards were being trained in using the GPS system.

Mr. Cafarella paused the meeting agenda to announce that this is Chairman DeCabooter's last Commission meeting and thanked him for all his hard work during his nine years on the Commission.

Chairman DeCabooter stated that Ms. Virginia Korte was appointed by City Council to the Commission.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE PRESERVE

Mr. Cafarella stated that the Finance Department had not finished reviewing the proposals yet and that this would be on next month's agenda.

DRAFT LETTER ON HELICOPTER

Mr. Cafarella commented that Lt. Gibson had attended a previous meeting with the Commission and discussed the police helicopter and that the Commission had wanted to send a letter to the Chief. Mr. Cafarella distributed a draft letter to the Commission.

Chairman DeCabooter asked the Commission to give feedback to staff within the next forty-eight hours.

MOTION WAS MADE BY Commissioner Ruff TO APPROVE THE LETTER SUBJECT TO MINOR REVISIONS. MOTION WAS SECONDED BY Commissioner Myers, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 9-0.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Cafarella distributed a list showing the status of all the State API lands petitions.

Chairman DeCabooter commented that Mr. Anabele, State Land Commissioner, was still very supportive of Scottsdale's initiative.

PRESERVE MANAGER'S REPORT

Ms. Miller stated that Code Enforcement would be helping to enforce the Preserve regulations, a grant application has been submitted, the March and April Project Activity Calendar had been sent out and that she was working on a project this weekend and with the State on March 23rd.

Mr. Cafarella commented that the Preserve Ordinance was not strong enough to enforce illegal dumping and the clean-up of the illegal dumping, so the ordinance was changed and that Code Enforcement standards will be brought up to the Preserve Ordinance's standards. Mr. Cafarella commented that Code Enforcement would be checking the South Access Areas and Gateway for violations.

Commissioner Myers suggested placing signs with a phone number to contact if they see something and explore other options for informing people on who to call.

Commissioner Fisher commented that they would put it in the Land Trust newsletter.

FUTURE EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION WAS MADE by Commissioner Ruff TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR April 4, 2002 FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC BODY AND CONSULTATION WITH CITY ATTORNEY FOR LEGAL ADVICE TO CONSIDER ITS POSITION AND INSTRUCT ITS REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING NEGOTIATING FOR PURCHASE OR LEASE OF REAL PROPERTY FOR INCLUSION IN THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE. ARS 38-431.03 (A) (3) and (A) (7). MOTION WAS SECONDED by Commissioner Berkley, which carried unanimously, 9-0.

AGENDA ITEMS/COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman DeCabooter thanked the Commissioners and previous Commissioners for all their hard work.

Commissioner Carla asked for an update on the level of outreach to the patrol officers with regards to the Preserve.

Commissioner Myers suggested a future meeting with Fountain Hills Preserve Committee and the County regarding trail clearing.

Mr. Nichols commented that in 1995 the Commission developed a prioritization list on land to be acquired in the Preserve, commenting that he would like to see this done with the State API land.

Mr. Meserve distributed a map of the 350 acres that Fountain Hills recently acquired as part of their Preserve.

Mr. Cafarella noted that at the next meeting Fountain Hill's preserve map would be superimposed against Scottsdale's Preserve map.

Mr. Cafarella commented that APS would be doing a presentation at a future meeting.

Chairman DeCabooter commented the quality of work from the staff.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION WAS MADE BY Commissioner Smith TO HOLD AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PUBLIC BODY AND CONSULTATION WITH CITY ATTORNEY FOR LEGAL ADVICE TO CONSIDER ITS POSITION AND INSTRUCT ITS REPRESENTATIVES REGARDING NEGOTIATING FOR THE PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY INCLUDING ALL PARCELS IN THE RECOMMENDED STUDY BOUNDARY IN THE AREA BETWEEN 122ND AND 132ND STREETS BETWEEN DYNAMITE BOULEVARD AND LONE MOUNTAIN ROAD, STATE TRUST LAND AT THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF BELL ROAD AND THOMPSON PEAK PARKWAY AND STATE TRUST LAND IN THE STATE LAND COMMISSIONER" ORDER OF AUGUST, 2001 FOR INCLUSION IN THE MCDOWELL SONORAN PRESERVE. ARS 38-431.03(A)(3) AND (A)(7). MOTION WAS SECONDED BY Commissioner Rau, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 9-0.

Submitted by:

Cathy Eley
Recording Secretary
P:3702min